

SENATE PASSES NEW AUDIT PLAN

FIRST OF GOVERNOR'S REFORM
MEASURES APPROVED; CHANGE
IN ADMINISTRATIVE BILL.

INQUIRY OF LOBBYISTS ASKED

Legislators Face Demand for Rigid
Economy, Also Biggest Budget
In State's History.

Lansing—The bill to change the methods of state accounting, submitted early in the session with the governor's administrative measure, was passed by the senate late last week after its third reading.

This bill brings all claims under control of the auditor general and the administrative board, exception being made only in the case of expenses in the office of the auditor general itself.

Cabinet Plan Near Vote.

The bill to create an administrative board composed of the governor and elective state officers was reported out following a joint session of the committees on state affairs of both houses, which was attended also by Governor Groesbeck and other officers who will become members of the new body if the measure is passed.

The only amendment of importance was made at this point, upon the suggestion of Governor Groesbeck himself. The change permits the mobilization of state employees in departments where, due to the season of the year or other causes, the greatest amount of work is to be done.

"It often occurs," said Governor Groesbeck, "that one department will have practically nothing to do at a time when some other department is swamped with work and needs additional help. Why not shift such employees as can be spared from the idle departments to those pressed for help, rather than allow some to sit idle while outside help must be obtained for others?"

Lobbyists Hamper Work.

Investigation of alleged unlawful lobbying is asked in a resolution presented in the house by Rep. Fred E. Dunn, Highland Park. The resolution calls for appointment of a committee of five, with full powers to call witnesses to inquire into the activities of lobbyists and their interest in bills pending before the house.

The resolution was drawn up upon request of Speaker Fred L. Warner, who said the house was becoming congested with lobbyists who interfered with the work of the present session.

Rep. Lennon's bill which would prohibit the use of firearms to aliens was presented last week. It is intended as a game and bird protection measure and provides that an unnaturalized foreign born resident of the state cannot lawfully have in his possession or home a shotgun, rifle or pistol.

More Revenue for U. of M.

Further financial aid for the University is provided in a bill introduced in the house by Rep. Peter B. Lennon, Genesee county. The bill raises the mill tax from three-eighths to five-eighths of a mill, which will mean added revenue to the university of \$1,130,000 annually. The bill was introduced at the request of President Burton of the University.

Defendants in criminal actions in appealing their cases to the supreme court must now file a printed copy of the case and Senator Condon, Detroit, has introduced a bill which provides that a certified copy of the record as prepared by the court stenographer may supplant the more expensive record.

Would Run Cost-Plus.

Cost-plus contracts would be outlawed so far as the state, counties and municipalities are concerned by a bill introduced by Senator Bayard G. Davis, Ingham county. It provides that all such contracts entered into heretofore for construction of public work shall be null and void. "These contracts are costing the public millions of dollars," said Senator Davis. "They cost my county \$50,000 last year. It is to the interest of persons taking such contracts to make public works as expensive as possible."

Circuit and justice court witnesses would receive a per diem increase in fees if the bill introduced by Rep. Peter Jensen, Escanaba, passes. It would increase the amount from \$7 to \$12 per day in justice court and \$1 and \$3 per day in circuit court.

Senator W. A. Lemire, Escanaba, believes that probate judges in counties of over 30,000 should be licensed attorneys and has introduced a bill to that effect in the senate. It exempts probate judges now in office.

"Bad Hog" Bill Presented.

Francis B. DeWitt's bill, which would amend the "Bad Hog" bill, has the distinction of being the first to be favorably reported in the house. It provides a penalty for drivers of trucks who refuse or neglect to turn aside patiently to leave passenger cars pass on public highways.

Residence of at least six months in the state would be required before any person could obtain employment at public work, according to a bill introduced by Rep. C. H. Culver, Detroit.

The joint committee of the senate

and house, named to investigate the activities of the Michigan Community council, held its first meeting last week. Senator Herbert Baker has been named as chairman of this committee.

Adjourn for Conventions.

The legislature adjourned on Friday until Tuesday to permit members to attend the county conventions held on Monday throughout the state for the purpose of naming delegates to attend the Republican state convention to be held in Detroit on February 17.

Taxes on terminal docks would be turned over to the municipalities in lieu of the primary school fund according to a bill introduced by Rep. Jensen, Iron Mountain, has submitted a bill providing a 10 per cent tax on all mining royalties, for local purposes.

From all parts of the state, the state's law-makers are being urged to vote only the expenses absolutely necessary in the conduct of the state's affairs. The board of supervisors of Gratiot county adopted and forwarded to the legislature a resolution which represents the general demand.

Tax-Paying Ability Lowered.

The resolution states that, "the prices of farm products have gone down to less than one-half, on an average, of what they were two years ago; great many factories are closed or running on short time, or with reduced force, and will not again be operated except at greatly reduced wages; all of which greatly lowers the tax-paying ability of the state. We earnestly urge the Legislature to keep the state taxes down at least to the level of two years ago, as we believe that large and steadily increasing taxes give encouragement to those who preach anarchy and discord for all organized forms of government."

That a difficult task lays before the legislature can easily be understood after a comparison of the budget appropriations for the past two sessions with the proposed expenditures for 1921. In 1919 the appropriation totaled \$34,809,224.08, an increase of \$16,091,664.75 over the 1917 total, while this year the various state departments, boards, institutions and commissions are asking for appropriations totaling \$58,304,103.11.

Real Estate Taxed Heavily.

Because of the favorable business conditions, the large increases of the past two years met with little protest but with the readjustment now taking place, a crying demand for rigid economy has arisen. Rep. Byrum, Ingham county, believes that the income of the average Michigan farmer will be only 60 or 70 per cent of the total of the past four years, while others predict that the general run of producers will have only about half of the average income for the past few years.

Governor Groesbeck in his inaugural message said that with the need of additional revenue to carry on the legitimate requirements of the state it would be necessary to provide other methods of raising the money. Practically all of the state's revenue is now being raised by taxation on real estate. Information is now being collected on the different methods of taxation in other states.

Wants Work on Home Stopped.

Much time has elapsed since the Legislature appropriated \$615,000 for the erection of the Michigan State Training School, at Okemos, a reformatory for women over 16 years of age who have been convicted of crimes. Only a heating plant and a bridge have been built, so Rep. Joe Watson, Branch county, has introduced a bill to let the 121 acres required and to terminate all contracts on the best terms possible. Mr. Watson declares that the state can better afford to abandon the project and suffer a \$100,000 loss now than complete the school at a cost of \$1 million and a quarter, for the accommodation of 60 or 70 women prisoners.

It is generally agreed that some provision must be made for the state's women prisoners and consideration will be given to the suggestion to attach the women's training school to either the Industrial school for Girls at Adrian or the state reformatory atonia. This would reduce the cost of operation to a minimum.

Mother's Aid Bill Ready.

Senator G. M. Condon, Detroit, chairman of the judiciary committee, is desirous of giving all interested women of the state a hearing on the McArthur amendment to the present mother's compensation bill, before submitting it to the senate. It calls for payment of not more than \$6, nor less than \$4 a week to a mother with one child, with corresponding increases for additional children, and no objection has yet been raised to the measure although a demand of \$12 a week had been submitted to the Governor by Detroit club women.

A bill providing a tax for so-called "closed" hospitals has been submitted by Senator O. G. Johnson, Fostoria, who is a physician and served in the Medical Corps during the late war. A closed hospital is defined in the bill as an institution for the care or relief of indigent or sick, where only physicians or surgeons on the institution's staff may treat the patients.

LEGION TO AID IMMIGRANTS

Plan Mapped Out by American Commission of Veterans' Organization to Extend Welcome.

Immigrants entering the United States will be received and welcomed by members of the American Legion, according to plans mapped out by the National American commission of the veterans' organization. Arrangements have been made whereby the local post of the community which is the ultimate destination of the immigrant will get in touch with him immediately upon his arrival.

Information as to the names and destinations of all immigrants will be secured at the port of New York and forwarded immediately to the thousands of Legion posts in order that they may prepare for the reception of the new arrivals.

"In some cases the immigrant may be going directly to friends," says the announcement of the American commission, "but in many cases he will be friendless and will be sure to have great trouble. He may need assistance in finding out where he can learn English, where he can send his children to school, where he can find a place to live and a place to work. Nothing could be more effective in lining up the new arrival on the side of law and order and of the things we believe in as being best for the country than this friendly welcome. It is this personal greeting from America that will help make the newcomer a 100 per cent American."

APPRECIATES AID OF LEGION

Federal Vocational Training Board Commends Consideration and Cooperation in Connecticut.

Thomas J. Bannigan, director of the service department of the American Legion at Hartford, Conn., has received this letter from Thomas Kirby, central office eligibility officer for the federal vocational training board:

"Before leaving Connecticut I desire on behalf of the chief at Washington and the whole federal board to express sincere appreciation for the consistent consideration and hearty co-operation of the American Legion during our stay in this state.

"There is consummate satisfaction and justifiable pride as we see these men, bearing the honorable scars of national service, marching into the dawn of a new era in their lives to become more valuable to themselves and to the country, and in the success that has attended our efforts the wholehearted support of your organization has been a conspicuous asset.

"While we are to be physically separated from you, you may be assured the triple chain of appreciation, respect and esteem that has bound you close to us during our brief but strenuous campaign will continue intact, and if in the future the Legion has any suggestions that might aid us in our work, they will receive the most respectful and serious consideration of the high authorities of the board."

Mr. Bannigan also is the adjutant of the department of Connecticut.

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